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Interview: Humberto Campana Opens Solo Exhibition 'On The Road' At Friedman Benda

By Kat Barandy



installation view | photography by Timothy Doyon, courtesy Friedman Benda, Estúdio Campana

HUMBERTO CAMPANA ON NEW BEGINNINGS AT FRIEDMAN BENDA

[Friedman Benda](#) presents *On the Road*, a new exhibition by the renowned Brazilian design studio [Estúdio Campana](#). This marks the studio's fifth solo show at the gallery and the first with the studio's co-founder Humberto Campana as the sole principal designer following the [passing](#) of his brother Fernando in November 2022. The exhibition opens a new chapter for both the studio and Campana himself, signifying the 40th anniversary of Estúdio Campana. designboom met with Humberto Campana at Friedman Benda's New York gallery during the opening of *On the Road*. Estúdio Campana's co-founder discussed his new directions and inspirations during this transition in his life, along with his larger project in Brazil.



portrait of Humberto Campana, courtesy Friedman Benda

REFLECTION THROUGH DESIGN

The designer describes *On the Road* at [Friedman Benda](#) as a reflection during a period of significant change for both [Estúdio Campana](#) and for himself personally. *'It means that I'm still on the road,'* Campana says. *'You know, my brother went away. And he's still here. When You lose someone, another door opens. And this door had opened very wide, my mind. I've been so inspired since that.'* The exhibition embodies this sentiment, showcasing a renewed focus on nature, spirituality, and the potential for creation and beauty found in unexpected places.

ESTÚDIO CAMPANA CELEBRATES CRAFT AND LOCAL MATERIALS

Still, Estúdio Campana remains dedicated to exploring and elevating traditional Brazilian craft techniques, which can be seen at the Friedman Benda exhibition. The works presented in *'On the Road'* feature a variety of local and recycled materials, including adobe, repurposed aluminum scraps, and Jequitibá wood. Campana explains, *'I'm still keeping also the best ideas... from materials, reusing. But bringing with that maturity.'* This commitment to sustainability and honoring heritage is a hallmark of Estúdio Campana's design philosophy.

On the Road exemplifies Estúdio Campana's signature approach of imbuing everyday materials with a sense of wonder and emotional resonance. Campana explains, *'Since the beginning our work has this connection with spirituality. They are handmade, they are tailoring objects where you put emotion, which is love.'* The resulting works are more than just furniture — they are artistic expressions that tell stories and evoke feelings.



installation view | photography by Timothy Doyon, courtesy Friedman Benda, Estúdio Campana

Humberto Campana's dedication to the environment extends beyond his design practice. He describes his ongoing reforestation project, which includes the establishment of a school and nature preserve in his hometown outside São Paulo. *'We heritage a piece of land from my family. And we already planted 20,000 native trees, I love to plant trees... We are creating a foundation with twelve green pavilions made with cactus and bamboo.'* This initiative reflects Campana's belief in the interconnectedness of art, education, and environmental responsibility.



Fernando and Humberto Campana, Jalapão Chair (Branca), 2024

Estúdio Camapana's Friedman Benda exhibition *On the Road* serves as a homage to the late Fernando Campana. '*There is the memories of Fernando, my brother,*' says Humberto. '*This show is an homage to him. Because he's here. He's all the time inspiring me.*' The exhibition features new works inspired by dreams and conversations with Fernando, showcasing the enduring impact of their creative partnership. These especially include the pieces made with aluminum scraps, an idea which was spearheaded by Fernando, and which Humberto was reluctant at first to embrace.



Fernando and Humberto Campana, Paisagem Console, 2024

Humberto Campana describes himself as constantly 'on the road,' always seeking inspiration and pushing creative boundaries. *'I guess it's a moment of maturity,'* he reflects. *'After his passing away, a lot of things changed in my life. I'm seventy-one. And I try to be inspired all the time, you know, on the road. Get out of the comfort zone, for me to get inspired I need to get out. Go to the other side.'* On the Road embodies this spirit of exploration and the transformative power of artistic expression.



installation view | photography by Timothy Doyon, courtesy Friedman Benda, Estúdio Campana